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Conservatory

Concert Program

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The 242 Strings

2024-2025 NEC Honors Ensemble

Ava Kenney, violin
Yu-Heng Wang, viola
Ching-Yu Tseng, cello
Daniel Chen Wang, piano

Kim Kashkashian, coach

Saturday, April 19, 2025

7:30 p.m.

NEC's Jordan Hall

PROGRAM

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756–1791)

Piano Quartet in G Minor, K. 478
Allegro
Andante
Rondo: Allegro

Yangfan Xu '25 DMA

Oh Appalachia

Intermission

Richard Strauss
(1864–1949)

Piano Quartet in C Minor, op. 13
Allegro
Scherzo: Presto
Andante
Finale: Vivace

We came together to form The 242 Strings in the spring of our freshmen year, after finding each other through a reading session. Now as sophomores, we've had the privilege of working with the amazing Kim Kashkashian, who has helped us discover the life behind the music being presented today. We've also had the opportunity to play in classes and lessons for Vivian Weilerstein, Donald Weilerstein, Raman Ramakrishnan, Ara Gregorian, Nick Cords, and Pavel Nersessian, who have all helped us grow artistically. We cannot thank them enough for all the wonderful advice these mentors have given us, advice that helped us find so much more meaning and nuance in the music we present to you today!

– Ava, Ching-Yu, Daniel, Yu-Heng

Upcoming 2024-2025 Honors Ensemble Concert

Nth° Wind Quintet

Sunday, May 4, 8:00 p.m., Jordan Hall

Mozart Piano Quartet in G minor, K.478

In 1785, Mozart received a commission for three piano quartets from the well-known music publisher and composer Franz Anton Hoffmeister. Hoffmeister intended these commissions to be light and easily-readable chamber music for general consumption and purchase. However, Mozart produced the highly dramatic and technically demanding G minor Piano Quartet, much to Hoffmeister's dismay, and after poor sales on this first quartet, Hoffmeister cancelled the commission on the rest. Despite its difficulty, the G minor and subsequently written E-flat major piano quartets soon became some of Mozart's most popular chamber works, and inspired the creation of many other works in this instrumentation like the Brahms, Fauré, Dvořák, Schumann, and of course, the Strauss piano quartets. With G minor being Mozart's iconic key of turbulence and dramatic intensity, the first movement opens with a stern gesture played in unison, but later yields to a gentler second theme in the relative key of B-flat. However, the storminess of G minor returns again and again in this movement. The lyrical and expansive second movement is again in B-flat. Gentle but dignified, it seems to recall an intimate scene from one of Mozart's operas. The joyful and boisterous G major Rondo closes the quartet in a bright and festive atmosphere, full of inventive melodies and abounding energy.

Xu Oh Appalachia

Inspired by the evocative charm of Appalachian folk music, *Oh Appalachia* is a musical journey through mountain landscapes and the refreshing simplicity of nature's open air. This piano quartet captures the rustic beauty and the soulful echoes of the Appalachian mountains, blending traditional folk motifs with vivid impressions of expansive views and crisp, invigorating breezes. – *Yangfan Xu*

Strauss Piano Quartet in C minor, op.13

From a composer most well-known for his large symphonic works and operas, the C minor quartet was one of the few pieces of chamber music Strauss composed during his lifetime. Written between 1884-1885 when he was just 20, Strauss was at the dawn of his compositional career. It shows considerable influence from Brahms, and its textural complexity and large-scale already hints at the career trajectory of the young composer. The Brahmsian influence is most evident in the first movement, with its dark sonority, development of small motifs, and dramatic conception. The Scherzo is extremely fast paced, bursting with energy, with a tender and lyrical middle section in B major. The two powerful preceding movements give way to a calmer, introspective third movement. The last movement returns to being fast, fiery and dramatic, full of syncopated rhythms and chromatic lines but juxtaposed with a calm, serene second theme, first introduced by the cello. Different moods alternate, and an even faster paced Coda closes the quartet in tragedy.

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and photography and audio or video recording are prohibited.

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